

Are we there yet?

Colossians 1:11-20

November 21, 2010

Are we there yet?

Well, no. We are not yet where we want to be. We are not yet where we believe God is taking us. We keep hoping. We keep waiting. But we're not there yet.

We are about to begin the season of Advent. Advent is a season for hoping, a season for waiting. We wait for Jesus to come.

Yes, I know, Jesus has come. Jesus was born, a long time ago, but we wait for Jesus to come to this world again. We wait for God to finish what he started with Jesus, to bring into being the kingdom Jesus talked about, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of righteousness and justice, the kingdom of peace. We wait for God to make things right, to make all things right, to make an end to evil and an end to death. We wait for God to make all things new.

We're not there yet. People are still at war with each other, still bitter enemies, unreconciled to each other, still hating each other. Too many people still suffer needlessly, plagued by hunger and disease and poverty. Justice is too often not just, merely the tool the powerful use against the powerless.

We're not there yet. We are unreconciled to each other and unreconciled to God. People scoff at religion, believing we have outgrown our childish need for a belief in something above and beyond ourselves. Or, on the other hand, on the other side, people use religion to serve their own purposes, using God's name to denounce their enemies and to pass judgment on people who think or act or look differently from them. Isn't that what is meant by taking the Lord's name in vain? Using the Lord's name for evil purposes?

And we still live in a world where greed and fear and pride and just plain selfishness trump love, in too many of us, too much of the time.

We're not there yet. You and I are unfinished business. Our warts, our flaws, our weaknesses, our sins, are still so much a part of who we are. We are not yet the strong and steady and faithful and faith-full and truly loving people we want to be. God's Spirit still has a lot work to do in us!

We're not there yet, are we? We're not there yet ... are we?

Listen! Listen again to the Scripture.

May you be made strong with all the strength which comes from God's glorious power. so that you may be able to endure everything with patience ...

Yes, of course. We need strength from God to be able to be patient while we are waiting, while life is still so difficult, while God's business is still unfinished. We need to be patient in this world as it is. We need to be patient with ourselves as we are.

But keep listening!

With joy give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit ...

Who has made you fit! God has made you fit for your share in the kingdom of light! It doesn't say God will make you fit, or you are on your way to becoming fit. It says you are fit!

God has made you fit! God has rescued us from the power of darkness! God has brought us safe into the kingdom of his dear Son! We are set free! Our sins are forgiven! All this has been done! We are there!

And that's why we give thanks, with joy! We give thanks for all that God has already done for us, for where God has already brought us. Give thanks to the Lord, because the Lord is good!

[Show [Give Thanks to the Lord](#) video]

We are thankful for family and for friends, for God's faithfulness in every situation, for opportunities to be helpful, for our church, for the love of Christ, for the love of Christ ...

he is the visible likeness of the invisible God
he is the first-born Son
the visible likeness of the invisible God
he is superior to all created things
the visible likeness of the invisible God

through him God created everything
he is superior to all created things
God created the whole universe through him
and for him
he is superior to all created things

Christ existed before all things
 he is the visible likeness of the invisible God
in union with him all things have their proper place

he is the head of his body, the church
 he is the source of the church's life
in union with him all things have their proper place

he is the first-born Son
 the visible likeness of the invisible God
he is before all things in life and he is
 before all things in being raised from death to life
in union with him all things have their proper place

by God's decision, he has in himself the full nature of
 God
 he is the visible likeness of the invisible God
he is before all things
 in union with him all things have their proper place

through him, God decided to bring the whole universe
 back to himself
through him, God created everything
 and through him God brought everything back
in union with him all things have their proper place

through him, God made peace
 and brought back to himself all things
through him. all things were brought back to God
 through him, God made peace
God made peace

God made peace. It has been done! We are there! Because of Christ, we have been reconciled to God. Because of Christ, we are at peace with God. Because of Christ, we are at peace in God.

Rock-climbers speak of the crux of a climb. The crux is the crucial point in the climb, the most difficult obstacle, the hardest move. Once you have climbed past the crux, there may still be a lot of hard climbing left, but you are sure now of making to the top.

In a football game, there is often a critical series, a decisive play. In last year's Super Bowl, it was Tracy Porter's return for a touchdown of an intercepted Peyton Manning pass that sealed the victory for New Orleans. There was still

some football left to be played, but the Saints, and all of us watching, knew they had already won.

Almost sixty years ago, Jonas Salk developed an effective vaccine against polio. At that moment, the disease was defeated, because a cure had been found. All that remained was to get the word out, to get the vaccine out, to everybody in the world. Sixty years later, there is still some work to be done, but polio is close to being eradicated forever.

God made peace. Through Christ, God made peace with all things. There is still work to be done. God's business is not yet finished. We are not there yet. But the crux has been passed! The game has been won! The cure has been found! All that remains is to get the word out, to get the cure out, to get Christ out, to everybody in the world. Because it is in union with him that all things have their proper place.

There is work still to do, but peace has been won. And that is good reason to be thankful! Give thanks to the Lord, because the Lord is good!